

AIR MAIL COMMENTARY

By ALEX DAVIS

SHOULD air-mail stamps be different in shape from other stamps? This old question is raised anew by recent diamond-shaped issues from Costa Rica and from Tannou-Touva.

In favour of this and similar shapes it is argued that air-mail letters should be made as readily distinguishable from other letters as possible; so that the postal sorting clerks can pick them out for quick despatch; against, it is argued that they become freak issues selling to philatelists, and their real purpose is obscured.

Certainly one must suspect a desire to sell to philatelists behind the Tannou-Touva issue, for here in one set are included also triangular and rectangular stamps.

Of the Costa Rica issue, illustrated on this page, the most notable thing apart from its shape is the illustration of a Ryan Brougham, because just the same picture (but with different scenery beneath the machine) has been used previously, both in Costa Rica itself and in Ecuador, on earlier air stamps.

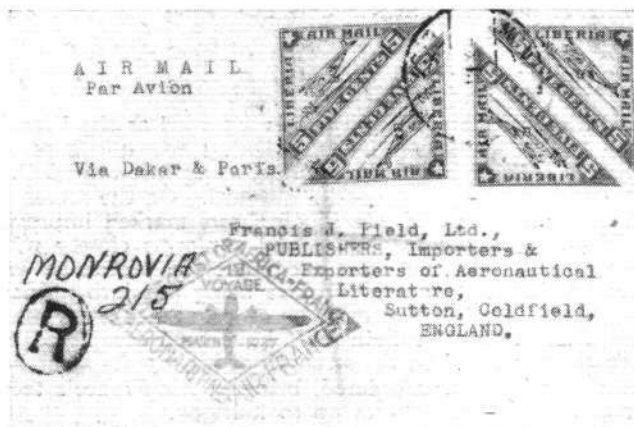
A Junkers Ju. 52 is illustrated—for the first time on a postage stamp, I believe—on the latest 1½d. issue of South-West Africa. Intended for general postal use, it shows also a modern steamship and locomotive.



The new diamond-shaped Costa Rica issue. The aeroplane is the Ryan Brougham of circa 1930.

Spain provides something new in air stamps with an issue for Franco's aviation fund—overprinted with the words "Pro Avion" and "Zaragoza." Other new overprinted issues are from Panama and Guatemala, while an original design comes from Portugal, with a symbolical composition of airscrew and shield; only 10,000 sets were issued, and some values are hard to get. The designer is Almada, and his work is refreshingly modern. Danzig, on the other hand, is comparatively traditional in a new set of two stamps, with a skyline of city over which flies a combination of aeroplane and swastika.

On the first through flight from Liberia to Europe very little mail was carried, and a cover (reproduced here) flown right



This cover, carried from Liberia by the new Aeromaritime service, was flown right through to England. It is also generously stamped and postmarked on the reverse side.

through to England is already priced at £5. There is a special cachet applied, with wording in English: "West Coast of Africa—France; Aeromaritime; Air France; 1st Voyage; March, 1937." An aeroplane is also illustrated in outline.

Another inconspicuous but interesting mark on air-mail covers includes the words: "1 let Praha-Bruxelles" (first flight from Prague to Brussels) and the date April 5. It comes from Czechoslovakia and bears air stamps of that country.

Yet another new cover carries the stamps of Palestine and reception postmark of Bucharest. It was carried on the first flight of the Polish Lot company's Palestine-Warsaw service, recorded in *Flight* on April 5.

Collectors of souvenirs such as these have recently welcomed two new publications—the reissued *Aero Field*, published by Mr. Francis J. Field and edited by Mr. N. C. Baldwin; and the new edition of *Gibbons' Air Stamp Catalogue*, which appears for the first time in a stiff cover. This, the fifth edition, lists 304 more air stamps than the fourth. If the present tendency to carry air mail at no extra fee continues to spread, there should be a slowing down of the torrent of such stamps—should be if Governments would cease to issue stamps to make profit from collectors.

Piston Service

MR. J. VERNON KELLY, until recently in charge of the Hepworth and Grandage piston and ring depot at Birmingham, has moved to London to take over the firm's imposing new depot at 78, York Road, King's Cross. Mr. T. Wilson succeeds him at Birmingham.

Repetition Work

IT may be recalled that a few months ago *Flight* mentioned the large supplies of aircraft small parts held in stock by A.G.S., Ltd., at their Hanworth premises.

The firm now states that, in order to cope with the heavy demand for nuts, bolts, etc., they have installed a battery of automatics, which are working on a 24-hour schedule. Nevertheless, they are able to undertake repetition work of all classes for Air Ministry contracts.

The Coronation and the Car Industry

HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI was born in the year 1895 and, by a coincidence, it may be said that the life of the automobile industry dates from that year—a year which also saw the founding of our sister journal *The Autocar*.

It is thus particularly fitting that *The Autocar*, in its Special Coronation Number (on sale to-morrow, Friday), should have for its main themes the development of the British car industry during this forty-two years and our reigning monarch's interest in many aspects of motoring.

These themes have been developed on most interesting lines, but what is even more outstanding is their presentation from the illustrative point of view. That usually overworked ad-
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jective "magnificent" can be applied truthfully and without exaggeration to the make-up of this great issue, which is printed in four-colour, two-colour and photogravure.

Outstanding among the special features are portraits of Their Majesties the King and Queen, in full colour, by Algernon Rowe; "This Heritage," an article which includes some most attractive coloured scenic illustrations by R. E. Poulton; "The King and his Pastimes"—a pictorial feature; biographies of the leading car firms in the industry, in which those who have owned cars at any time during the past 42 years will recognise many old friends; a review of coachwork development during the same period; a Coronation guide, giving details of traffic regulations; "Some London Cameos"; "The King's Garage and Mews"; and eight pages of photogravure illustrations, including pictures of recent automobile sporting events.

This notable Special Number will be on sale on Friday, April 30, price 6d.

NEW COMPANIES

In the notes below, for reasons of space, the "objects" of new companies are usually somewhat abbreviated.

BRITISH-AMERICAN AIR SERVICES, LTD., was registered as a private company on April 23, with a nominal capital of £100 in 100 shares of £1. The objects are to establish, develop and work air services in any parts of the world. The first directors are to be appointed by the subscribers. Solicitors: Glover, Scott and Anthorpe Webb, 115, Park St., London, W.1.

AEROPARTS ENGINEERING COMPANY LTD.—Private company, registered April 23. Capital, £3,000 in 3,000 shares of £1. Objects: to carry on the business of aircraft constructors and builders and type-testers of engines and aeroplanes, etc. The directors are: Hugh K. Pierson, Cyril H. Shelton, Robert White. Solicitor: Frank T. Carver, 44, Bridge Street, Hereford.

JABLO PROPELLERS LTD.—Private company, registered April 22. Capital, £10,000 in £1 shares (6,000 "A" ordinary and 4,000 "B" ordinary). Objects: to carry on the business of manufacturers of and dealers in airscrews, aeronautical engineers, dealers in aircraft and all components therefor, etc. The first directors are Hamilton Fulton, O.B.E., Harry Delacombe, O.B.E., Walter R. Chowin and Arthur G. Murrell. Registered office: Brettenham House, Lancaster Place, W.C.2.